LXXXIX.

BIBLIOTHECA BODLEIANA

A TRUE RELATION OF The Firing the *Steeple* of the *Great Church* AT YARMOUTH, BY

Lightning from *Heaven*, with an Account of the Dreadful Storm that hapned there, on *Thursday* the 8th of *February*, 1683. to the Astonishment of all the Inhabitants.

ALL men must grant that extraordinary Signs in the *Heavens* and unusual Combustions of the Elements, are expressions by which the Creator of all things speaks to the Sons of Mortals; And, amongst the rest, Dreadful Storms of Wind, Thunder and Lightning, have been often observed apparently to express his displeasure, against particular actions of men.

None that profess Christianity denying but that by the Storm, *&c.* which rent the *Temple* at the time of our Blessed *Saviours* Crucifixion, was an immediate signification from *Heaven*, as well of the Greatness of that Person who suffered as of the unparalell'd Ingratitude of the *Jews* to Crucify him.

But

But to leave that which all Christian-men allow; It is evident that in all Ages, the wickedness of men hath drawn inferences from such extraordinary accidents to serve their respective Interests; every one believing that the threatnings of Almightly are against those, who oppose his particular Faction.

I make this deviation, because a fault too ripe in our divided Age; wherein the Laws made for the preservation of the Nation in Peace and Unity (and the most wholsom, certainly, that the World affords) being uneasie to the Lovers of Division; If they suffer for their disobedience thereto, they ascribe all the Calamities that happen to be sent for the hardships (as they account it) used to them forgetting in the mean time the words of our Saviour *Let none of you suffer as an evil doer*; And of the Blessed *Apostle*, *Let every Soul be subject to the Higher Powers, for there is no Power but of God, &c.* with others of like Nature.

To return to our present subject; On *Thursday* the 8*th* of *February*, 1683. about two a Clock in the Morning, a Terrible and Dreadful Storm of Wind, Rain, Hail, Thunder and Lightning hapned in the parts about *Great Yarmouth*, in the County of *Norfolk*; which was so astonishing, that it Rowzed the Drowsie Inhabitants of the Town from their Couches, in expectation that the Frame of all things amongst them would be overturned; the Seas swelled to an unusual height, working much dammage to persons of all sorts; But that more particularly remarkable was, the Pinacle of the *Steeple*, at the *Great Church*, was broken down; the *Steeple* rent by the violence of the Thunder, and afterwards Fired by the Lightning which Burnt down the *Crosi*, and continuing to Burn for the space of four Hours; so much of the *Steeple* is faln down, that it's feared the Saylers, who are abroad, when they return upon that Coast, will be much Incomoded for want of their antient Seamark. All which was to the exceeding great affright and amazement of the Inhabitants, as well as admiration to others, who have since been there as Spectators.

And whereas in that Town, as well as other parts of the Kingdom, divers people have used to meet at unlawful Conventicles, in contempt of Religion and Law, as now Established; because one of those Meetings was used with some Severity three or four Days before, by the Magistrates of that place; such, who wrest all things to their own sense, will needs have that unusual Storm sent as a Judgment upon the *Great Church*; wherein the worship of God is more Solemnly performed. And it having been privately promoted amongst that sort of people, that the said *Thunder Storm* hapned immediately upon the disturbance of their Conventicle; I thought this Relation not altogether improper to inform the World of that mistake.

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